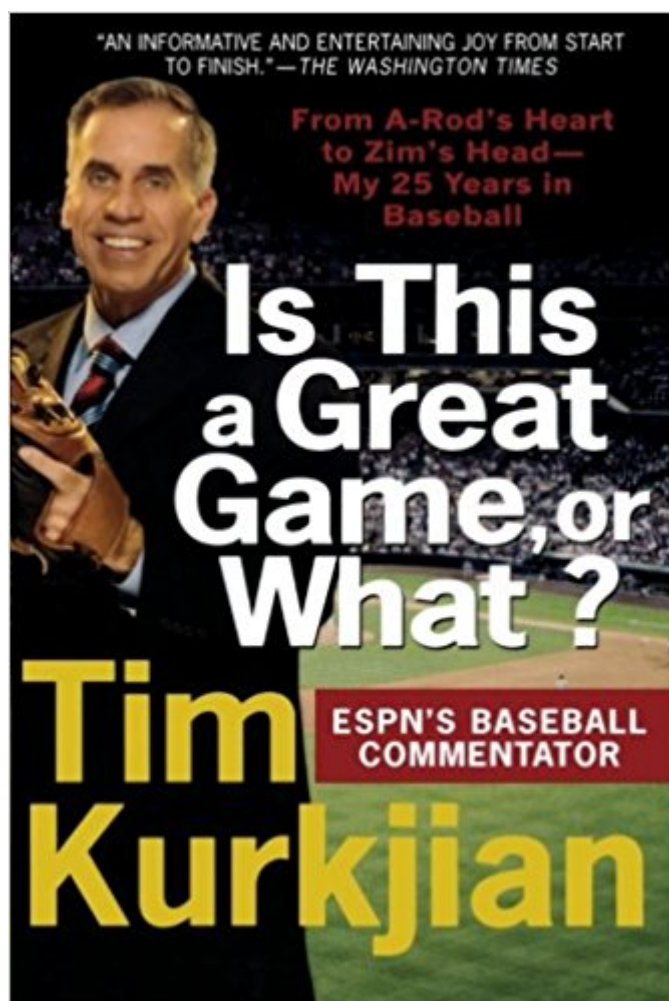


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Is This A Great Game, Or What?: From A-Rod's Heart To Zim's Head--My 25 Years In Baseball



Synopsis

ESPN's Tim Kurkjian has spent more than twenty-five years covering almost three thousand major league baseball games and interviewing about that many players, coaches, managers, and executives. In *Is This a Great Game, or What?*, Kurkjian combines his years of experience, uncanny knowledge, and deep love of the game, to create a book filled with some of the most fascinating insight into Major League Baseball this side of Jim Bouton's bestseller, *Ball Four*. Whether he's explaining what goes through a ballplayer's mind when he faces a fastball in the chapter "My Face Was Crushed by a Bowling Ball Going 90 MPH," detailing bizarre rituals and superstitions performed by baseball's greatest players, or taking us into the locker room to see what transpires in the clubhouse of a major league team, Kurkjian's tales are at times hilarious, other times horrifying, yet always entertaining. Kurkjian has spoken to some of the greatest ballplayers ever over the years, and they have revealed details about themselves and the game they love with a candor that readers won't find anywhere else. Filled with anecdotes and fascinating insights, this is an essential book for baseball fans or anyone curious about America's pastime.

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Customer Reviews

ESPN commentator Kurkjian waxes nostalgic about baseball and his career covering the major leagues. Much in the style of a broadcaster's chatter during a game or the baseball notes columns in newspaper sports pages, Kurkjian peppers the reader with a succession of stories, many no longer than a paragraph. He argues that baseball is the "ultimate skill sport," far superior to football, basketball and all other sports, as well as being the game where players have the most fear of being

hurt (by the ball, in this case). He goes on to say that baseball is the funniest game, its stats are the most significant, it has the best preseason, and it is the best game for kids. His rapid-fire stories in support of baseball deification sometimes come at an ad nauseam pace, but there are many entertaining ones in the bunch, including a player who confused the words "erudite" and "hermaphrodite" and another player who brought a live ostrich into a team meeting. His chapters on scouts, stats and spring training are among the best, while the behind-the-scenes chapter about ESPN's Baseball Tonight will be too much insider baseball for most readers. For a book that covers almost all angles of the major leagues, Kurkjian writes only briefly in his final chapter about the recent steroids scandals, a glaring oversight when discussing the modern game. (May) Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Kurkjian, who has covered major-league baseball for 25 years, was the little kid with a million baseball cards who couldn't play a lick, but he found a career in the game anyway. This is a collection of mostly humorous anecdotes collected on the baseball beat, but the standout chapter is a serious examination of the element of fear in the game. A baseball traveling at the speed it does--either pitched or hit--can do considerable damage when it comes in contact with an unprotected body part. Kurkjian interviewed many players who have sustained serious injuries when hit by a ball. Some recover physically but not mentally. Others overcome the fear but can't compensate for permanently altered vision. Kurkjian also has a wonderful chapter on baseball's unsung heroes, the scouts, underpaid lifers who travel thousands of backroad miles per year to find the next-best version of Mickey Mantle or Roger Clemens. Kurkjian is a fine writer who absolutely loves his work. Even as they savor every word, readers will be jealous: Why can't we love our jobs as much as this guy does? Wes Lukowsky Copyright © American Library Association. All rights reserved --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Tim Kurkjian has written a great book for baseball fans, because he is a fan, himself. This book relates many anecdotes and insights from Tim's years in baseball, and is a fun read. I had previously read his newest book, "I'm Fascinated with Sacrifice Flies". Some of the stories from "Is This a Great Game, or What?" are repeated in the newer book (which I also enjoyed), but the older book is the better one. Both give a lot of insight into the intricacies of baseball, plus stories and trivia about some of the characters who have been part of America's Game.

If you like baseball, you will like this book. You will forgive the minor flaws like a few repeated stories and slightly dated material and just go with it. Tim Kurkjian is the kind of a baseball fan who makes your own baseball obsessions (past, present or future) seem like little league. I'm reminded of my listening as a kid to Baltimore Oriole games in the 1970's on the RADIO while lining up each teams Topps baseball cards on the floor (we had terrible TV reception). I can imagine Tim's response to this information . . . THATS NOTHING!!! I TOOK MY BASEBALL CARDS TO THE ACTUAL GAME IN THE STADIUM AND RECITED EACH CARD BY MEMORY WHEN EACH BATTER CAME TO THE PLATE!!!! This book is a quick read and is fun, and actually a pretty substantial narrative on baseball in the past couple of decades. I am very glad I read it. In . . . oh . . . 3 days. You will like this book even more if you grew up an Orioles, Phillies or Texas Rangers fan as there are more antidotes from those teams. Since the last chapter is from 2007 . . . I think Tim is due for another book.

Love Tim's personable approach to writing about the game he loves!

good book great inside stories of players n teams if u like baseball this is ur book

Loved it. I've been a Kurkjian fan for years and his take on my beloved game of baseball is always interesting.

I was in MLB for 19 years with the Brewers and Tim hit on info I never knew. Class guy and a great book.

Kurkjian's love of baseball oozes off of every page. A pleasure to read the insights and observations of a true student of the game.

This is the best baseball book I've read in a long, long time. With this slim volume (it could have been twice as long and I still wouldn't have had enough...) Tim Kurkjian vaults ahead of his peers to become one of the pre-eminent baseball writers alive today. His elegant yet conversational style comes across beautifully on the printed page. It is so easy to read, yet many of his descriptions or turns-of-phrase are nicely constructed, poetic and hilarious. His arguments...baseball fans LIVE for arguments...are so concise yet clear-cut, that I will tell you there is no question who's a better baseball player, Ruth or Bonds. It may be obvious to you, yet Kurkjian's theorem is iron-clad, and

funny as all get out. The theoretical question as to how many baseballs would an average person hit off the average professional pitcher...the answer, unequivocally, is zero...is answered SO unequivocally that it's brilliant in its' brevity and wit. There are great lines and great stories on each and every page of this book. I was actually sad when it was done. I will buy every single baseball book Mr. Kurkjian writes, for the rest of his career, based on this one book. It's that good. By a mile.

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